

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1-20. (canceled)

21. (previously presented): A purified peptide consisting of an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:7, SEQ ID NO:8, SEQ ID NO:9 and SEQ ID NO:10.

22-23. (canceled)

24. (previously presented): The peptide of claim 21 wherein the peptide is immunologically reactive in an immunological assay for detection of rheumatoid arthritis.

25-32. (canceled)

33. (currently amended): A method for the detection of autoimmune antibodies in sera of a patient, comprising the steps of:

contacting ~~[[a]]~~ the peptide according to claim 28 of claim 21 with sera of the patient, and detecting ~~for the formation~~ the presence or absence of a complex between said peptide and an antibody.

34. (previously presented): The method of claim 33, wherein detecting comprises use of an anti-human antibody.

35. (currently amended): The method of ~~claim 6~~ claim 33, wherein detecting comprises the use of an enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA).